

VERMONT INSTITUTE OF NATURAL SCIENCE

# Records of Vermont Birds

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## SPRING MIGRATION 1983

1 MARCH - 31 MAY

FRANK OATMAN, SEASONAL EDITOR

This report marks the tenth anniversary of Records of Vermont Birds, whose first issue reported the spring migration of 1973. A look over that initial publication tells a lot about how far we have come in a decade. When I moved to Vermont in 1972, I was amazed that the state was still in the ornithological dark ages: compared to almost any other eastern state, Vermont was pitifully behind in knowledge of the state's birds. Distribution and status of breeding birds, dates of migration, etc. were very poorly documented. Now we are on the verge of publishing a Vermont Breeding Bird Atlas based on an intensive five year survey; and these Records have given us a database on birds at all seasons that is unprecedented and by now truly substantial. It is the field work and the reports of all of you that have made this possible. Keep up the good work!

Though all the editors want very much to find ways of making these reports more concise, it is my opinion that we must be very careful about how we do it. Environments are never static, and now two major and accelerating developments could produce far-reaching effects on Vermont's birds: 1) the rapid destruction of tropical forests, which are crucial winter habitats for many of our migratory species; and 2) increasing deposition of acids, heavy metals, and other chemicals through the acid-rain phenomenon here at home. We'll only know if such effects are occurring by carefully recording and evaluating actual numbers of Vermont birds. Thus I urge all of you to specify numbers when making reports; and thus I have tried in this issue to give an idea, however rough, of current population sizes and trends. A few observers are submitting seasonal analyses or their own impressions of population trends. These are often extremely helpful to the season's editor. Please keep them coming.

This was a season of some extraordinary rarities. The four that must lead the list (all first or second state records) are: a BAIKAL TEAL\* on the Lemon Fair, a species so far from its Asian haunts that it will probably be considered as escaped from captivity; an AMERICAN SWALLOW-TAILED KITE in Middlebury, the first Vermont record in 70 years; an IVORY GULL in S. Burlington; and a well photographed CLAY-COLORED SPARROW in Bridport, the state's second sighting and first documented record. Also quite rare in spring were Snowy Egret, Glossy Ibis, Black Scoter, Barrow's Goldeneyes, Ruddy Duck, Golden Eagle, Black-bellied Plover, Sedge Wren, and no less than five sightings of Orchard Oriole. A pair of Great Black-backed Gulls established the state's first nesting on Young Island, where Double-crested Cormorant breeding numbers virtually exploded, up from 1 nest last year (the state's first) to 15 by the end of May, with still higher numbers to come in June. A Turkey Vulture nest just inside the state on the Canadian border was not only rather far north but Vermont's first discovered nest of this rapidly expanding species, as well.

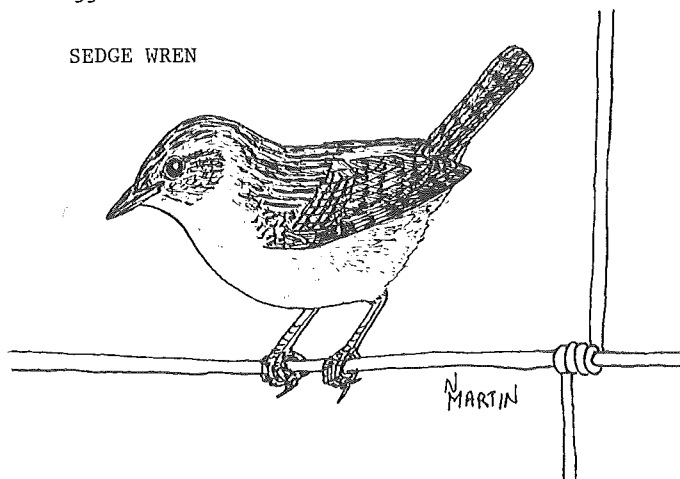
\* Acceptance by Vermont Bird Records Committee pending.

A long-term range expansion and/or increase of several other species seems clearly to continue: Turkey Vulture, Common Raven, Tufted Titmouse, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and House Finch. Several species were reported this spring in larger than normal numbers, and they might be watched to see if these trends continue: Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Cooper's Hawk, Red-headed Woodpecker, and Eastern Bluebird. The following species seemed, at least to some observers, to be present in lower than usual numbers: Cattle Egret, American Woodcock, Common Tern, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and Rusty Blackbird. Altogether 225 species, and 1 additional hybrid form, were reported this spring.

The weather, which was complex and atypical, can only be briefly summarized here. After an unusually mild, dry winter, the spring of 1983 was plagued by heavy and nearly continuous precipitation and by several severe cold systems which brought the heaviest snows of the winter-spring season. March precipitation was above normal, and both April and May recorded the heaviest average precipitation for the state in the 53 years that this statistic has been determined. The bad weather apparently did more to keep birders indoors than the birds backed up, however.

Space has not allowed me to repeat with each species involved the typical pattern of arrival of a vanguard of migrants during the intervals of mild weather, often early or about on time; then a severe interruption or two caused by cold, wet (and often snowy) weather; followed by a resumption of migration during clearer and warmer intervals. A number of observers considered the migration to be poor and late. It may come as a surprise to learn that 12 species set earliest-ever arrival dates and 18 others were considerably earlier than normal. Those 7 species which arrived noticeably late were apparently unfortunate enough to have their normal arrival times coincide with one of the unseasonal snowstorms, which came on April 16th and 17th (with light amounts continuing daily through the 21st) and on May 8th and 9th. It is likely that many birds found feeding difficult as snows covered the ground and cut off insect food supplies, and both reverse migration and bird mortality may have occurred. Good weather held by 21 May when the Annual Vermont Birdathon was held, and 178 species were logged statewide.

SEEDGE WREN



## MANAGING EDITOR'S NOTE:

As regular readers of these Records know, reports of rare or unusual species are referred to the Vermont Bird Records Committee, which attempts to weigh such reports and be sure all necessary data is provided to assure the validity of reports which they accept, and to withstand the scrutiny of future generations. The standards which they have set for first state records, require either a photograph, the independently written reports of two observers, or (where a bird has been found dead as with the unfortunate Artic Tern in the Spring of 1981) a specimen. The Committee takes it's responsibility seriously, and as an independent scientific body (for example, they recently rejected a report submitted by your Managing Editor!).

Although the following records HAVE NOT been accepted by the Committee, either pending more research or because they did not meet the necessary criteria; I believe they should be recorded in these pages:

## Boat-tailed Grackle

May 1983 - Old Bennington (exact date not recorded), reported by Dr. Helene Toolan, who is familiar with the species in Florida. Species never before recorded in Vermont. Because of criteria listed above, could not be accepted as a first state record.

## Thayer's Gull

March 5, 1983 - Burlington waterfront, Walter G. Ellison and Nancy L. Martin.  
N.B. Such statements as birds being "earliest ever" etc. refer specifically to reports made to the Records of Vermont Birds (1972-1983).

## LOONS THROUGH HERONS

A single Red-throated Loon was seen May 14 at St. Albans by J. D. Marsh. Two early Common Loons were seen Mar. 14 at Long Point, Ferrisburg (MCD,JID). None were reported thereafter until Apr. 12. An impressive 43 Com. Loons were tallied, with highs of 5 on both Apr. 23 at L. Fairlee and May 21 at Island Pond (WGE,et al.). Fourteen Pied-billed Grebes were reported, with the earliest Apr. 9 at Missisquoi and Apr. 14 (1) at Herrick's Cove (WJN). The seasonal high was 3 on May 21 at L. Memphremagog's South Bay (WGE,GFE,NLM). Twenty-one Horned Grebes were reported, Apr. 2-25, with a high of 7 on Apr. 16 at Button Bay (DLC). Three Red-necked Grebes were seen: Apr. 22 at Herrick's Cove and below Steamtown, and Apr. 25 at Herrick's Cove (REG,MEC). At least 95 Double-crested Cormorants were reported, beginning with a group of 15 flying in formation at Button Bay on Apr. 16 (DLC). Other highs were 16 on May at Burlington (JDM) and 20 on both Apr. 22 at Woodstock (WGE) and May 20 at Popasquash Island (JDM). By May 25, 15 nests had been found at Young Island (RBL), Vermont's second breeding record ever and up remarkably from last year's single nest. Away from the Champlain area, Double-crests were also seen Apr. 21 at Rockingham (MEC) and Apr. 23 at Herrick's Cove (DC,MEC). Single American Bitterns were first seen Apr. 26 at W. Rutland Marsh (hereafter WRM) (LPS) and May 5 at Dead Creek (DLC). Several areas reported seasonal firsts May 14-21. Thirty-two birds were reported, with a seasonal high of 4 on May 21 at Barton River Marsh (hereafter BRM), Newport (WGE,GFE,NLM). Four Least Bitterns were recorded: May 21, singles at WRM (WJN), Mud Creek (WRB), and Dead Creek (MJM); May 30, 1 a Dead Creek (LPS). A Great Blue Heron was seen Feb. 3 at Saxtons River (DE,fide MFM). Early individuals were reported Mar. 20 at Missisquoi (TM,JNi), Mar. 27 at New Haven (KHD), and Mar. 27 at Burlington (JDM). Highs of 7 at a single location were twice recorded, Apr. 27 and May 1; the seasonal high was 25+ seen May 21 between Missisquoi and Dead Creek (WRB,MJM). There were two sightings of the rare Great Egret: May 4, 2

at Rutland (RWP,RHH,CJF); and May 23, 1 at Kingsland Bay (JRA). The Snowy Egret, a mostly coastal species in the northeast and rare in Vermont, was seen twice: 1 on Apr. 23 at Herrick's Cove (REG,MEC) and 1 on May 13 at Starksboro (WRB). There were but three reports of Cattle Egrets: May 5, number? at Young Island (JDS); May 15-16, 1 at Halifax (BHA); and May 19, number? at Missisquoi (TM,JNi). Single Green-backed (formerly Green) Hérons first appeared Apr. 30 at Burlington (JDM) and Snake Mt. (JSA,KMA). Many areas recorded firsts May 3-11. A respectable 41 birds were reported, an increase probably more indicative of better observer coverage than of increased numbers of the herons. Twenty-five Black-crowned Night-Hérons were reported, all of them from the Champlain region. The earliest was 1 on Apr. 14 at Dead Creek (JSA,KMA). The seasonal high followed close on that report: 6 roosting in 1 dead tree at Dead Creek on Apr. 16 (KHD). There was one report of the rare Glossy Ibis, a single bird seen May 3 & 4 at Shelburne Farms (PHS, fide DEC).

## WATERFOWL

Snow Geese set an early record by returning to Vermont by Mar. 7, when a few were seen with Canadas at Shelburne Point (BM). There were 3 other March records for the Champlain region, 5 on Mar. 9, 125+ on Mar. 22, and 16 from Mar. 29 into Apr. The first big push came on Apr. 2 when 6 groups of observers along L. Champlain reported a total of 1,769 Snows. Another push came on Apr. 6, when 5 widely scattered parties tallied 302 birds. Altogether ca. 2,475 Snow Geese were reported this spring, with the final report on May 21 (1 with Canadas at Dead Creek--WRB,MJM). On Mar. 6 several observers totaled ca. 650 Canada Geese along L. Champlain, a good number for that early. Heaviest movement was reported the last half of March, with highs of ca. 1,500 on Mar. 19 on the Lemon Fair river (JSA,KMA), 5,000+ on Mar. 26 at Dead Creek (MBN), and 1,840+ at Addison on Mar. 27 (WGE,NLM). Migrant flocks were seen all through Apr. and into early May, with the latest being 10 laggard Canadas at Herrick's Cove May 24-25 (WJN). At Dead Creek several pairs had goslings by May 29 (WRB,MJM). The first Wood Ducks were seen Mar. 17 (a pr.) at Missisquoi (TM,JNi); many other areas reported seasonal firsts in March. Highs of 6-12 were not uncommon in Apr. The numbers of resident birds seemed good in the Newport area (FO). At Albany a Wood Duck investigating a chimney for a nesting site got stuck and had to be released through the damper (TP). Green-winged Teal first appeared Mar. 26, 6 at Missisquoi (TM,JNi), and 15 seen the next day at Dead Creek (WGE,NLM), indicating an early push. Another push apparently came Apr. 22-28, with highs of 8-12 several times seen. Dead Creek still had 1 bird on May 21 (MJM,WRB,DLC). On Apr. 26 James S. and Kristine M. Andrews located a curious looking teal feeding near Blue-winged Teal on a flooded edge of the Lemon Fair river. The bird, subsequently seen by others (e.g., Bruce Peterson, Alan Pistorious), was present until Apr. 30. Examination of the Andrews' drawings and photographs by Chandler Robbins and others at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service "leaves little doubt" that the bird was a male BAIKAL TEAL, an Asian species which very rarely straggles to the Pacific coast of N. America. There are at least 3 previous U.S. reports from east of the Mississippi R., but these have mostly been regarded as birds escaped from captivity, a likely status determination for this spring's bird (action still pending by Vermont Bird Records Comm.). If accepted, this would certainly represent Vermont's first record of the species. American Black Ducks overwintered on the New Haven River, which they left

some time in early March (KHD). Migrants began arriving elsewhere in early Mar., with firsts on Mar. 6 at both Dead Creek (18 WRB,MJM) and Missisquoi (3 TM,JNi). Highs were: 56, on Mar. 9 on the Lemon Fair and 80 Mar. 20 W. Salisbury (JSA,KMA); 84+ on Mar. 27 on the Conn. R. (MEC) and 200 at Herrick's Cove Mar. 30/31 (WJN). Most movement was over by early Apr. Adults with ducklings were reported May 18, 28, and 29. Mallard migration coincided fairly closely with that of the Black Duck, with Mallard firsts on Mar. 5 at both Ferrisburg (4 JSA,KMA) and Clarendon (3 CJF). Many areas had firsts around mid-March, and the movement seemed to peak Mar. 6-27, with highs at 60+ at Shelburne Mar. 6 (WRB,MJM), 80 Mar. 20 at W. Salisbury (JSA,KMA), and 100 Mar. 25 at Herrick's Cove (WJN). Mallards were uncommon throughout Apr. and May. Two females were observed on nests May 7 at WRM (SBL et al.). Approximately 140 Northern Pintails were reported Mar. 6 to May 20, the best tally in several years. Highs were 30 on Mar. 17 at Missisquoi (TM, JNi); 28 on Mar. 27 at Addison (WGE,NLM); 10 on Mar. 31 at Herrick's Cove (WJN); and 7 on May 4 at Albany, where they are scarce (TP). Curiously, Blue-winged Teal were not seen until Apr. 1, when 6 appeared in the Champlain Valley (JSA,KMA). The first report away from Champlain was 1 at Herrick's Cove on Apr. 6 (MEC). There were no notable concentrations; high counts were 15 on Apr. 30 at Newport (FO,WS) and 12 on May 5 at Dead Creek (DLC). About 33 Northern Shovelers were reported, the best count in the 10 years of these Records (previous high 17). Reports stretched from Apr. 7 to May 26, with a predominance of reports falling Apr. 20-30 and with a high of 5 on Apr. 23 at Shelburne (DLC). There were but 5 reports of the scarce Gadwall, Apr. 2 to May 13, for a total of 11 birds reported. Only 15 American Wigeons were reported (a poor showing), but the first was an early male Mar. 9 at on the Lemon Fair (JSA,KMA). No more than 2 were seen at one time, with scattered reports continuing until May 29 (2 at Dead Creek MBN). Canvasbacks were, as usual, scarce: first, 12 on Mar. 6 at Burlington (JDM); Mar. 16 at Bellows Falls (REG); 3 on Mar. 26 at Rockingham (WGE,NLM); 3 on Mar. 26 near L. Champlain Bridge (JSA,KMA); 5 on Apr. 1 at Sand Bar (JDM); 4 on Apr. 12 on L. Champlain and 7 on Apr. 22 at Bellows Falls (PB). There were 28 reports of Ring-necked Ducks, Mar. 17 to May 10, with highs of 31 on Apr. 15 on L. Bomoseen (WGE,NLM), ca. 30 Apr. 23 at L. Bomoseen (SBL,HBS), and 20 on Apr. 30 at Newport (FO, WS). A flock of Scaup, species unknown, on Mar. 6 at Colchester were the first Scaup seen (JDM). Only 73 Greater Scaup were reported, Mar. 20 to Apr. 22, with highs of 15 on Apr. 19 at Colchester (WGE,NLM) and 35 on Apr. 2 at S. Hero (CJF,RHH). There were but 3 reports of Lesser Scaup: 4 on Mar. 20 at Missisquoi (TM, JNi), "a flock" Apr. 22 at Dead Creek (FP), and 1 on May 21 at Newport (WGE,NLM,GFE). The scarce Oldsquaw was twice reported: 1 Apr. 16 at Herrick's Cove (WGE, NLM,et al.) and 2 prs. Apr. 20 at Herrick's Cove (REG). On May 21 at Island Pond Walter and George Ellison and Nancy Martin found a male Black Scoter, a species rare in spring. The Surf Scoter, scarce in spring, appeared once, a pr. Apr. 20 at Herrick's Cove (REG,MEC). The White-winged Scoter was also seen once, 1 m. May 21 at Kent Pond (ALG,JMN). Common Goldeneyes apparently overwintered, but reports Mar. 5 & 6 on L. Champlain probably represent migration. Highs were 20 on Mar. 31 at Herrick's Cove (WJN), 125 on Apr. 1 at Colchester & Sand Bar WMA (JDM), and 23 on Apr. 2 at Button Bay (DLC). The first BARROW'S GOLDENEYES ever reported to the spring Records were seen on Mar. 26 (a pair) at the mouth of the Winooski R. in Colchester by John D. Marsh. Buffleheads appeared in normal numbers, Mar. 16 to May 21. Highs were 8 on Apr. 2, Button Bay; 33 on May 1, Shelburne

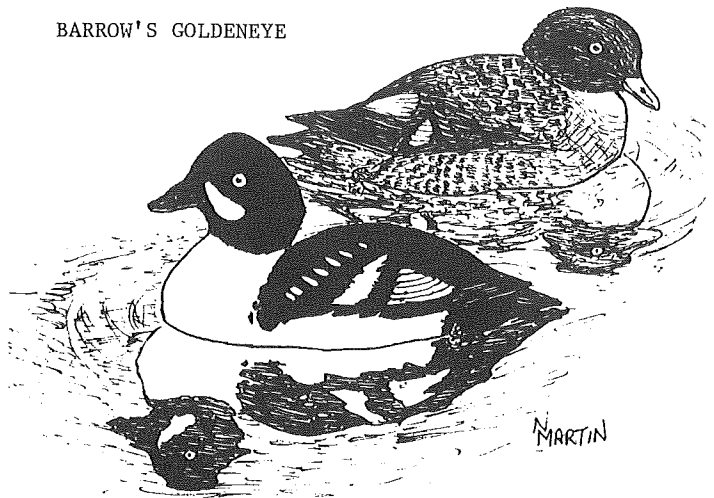
Bay; and 9 on May 6, Shelburne Bay (all by DLC); 5 were seen May 10 at Seymour L. (CF), and 2 at N. Springfield Dam on May 21 (CDK,DJK,EE,HSP). Hooded Mergansers were reported Mar. 6 to May 20, but most migration came mid to late March, with highs of 7 on Mar. 12 on the Lamoille R. (JDM) and 16 on Mar. 26 at Herrick's Cove (WGE,NLM). Common Mergansers, which overwintered and which breed in small numbers in Vermont, migrated through from early March to early May, with highs of 45 near Burlington Mar. 5 (JDM), 109 near Burlington Mar. 12 (JDM), 146 in Addison Mar. 16 (WGE,NLM,JPM), 99 at L. Pineo in Quechee Apr. 24 (WGE, NLM), and 8 at Roundy's Cove May 5 (WJN). A total of 63 Red-breasted Mergansers were tallied, a good count, with reports scattered from Mar. 25 to a pair copulating on May 21 at Charlotte (JRA); of interest since the species has only bred in Vermont once. Highs were: 6-8 on Apr. 7 on L. Champlain (JSA,KMA), 13 on May 1 at Button Bay (DLC), and 12 on May 21 at Shelburne (DLC). Phebe Jane Mullen reported a single RUDDY DUCK Apr. 12 on L. Champlain, the first spring report since 1979.

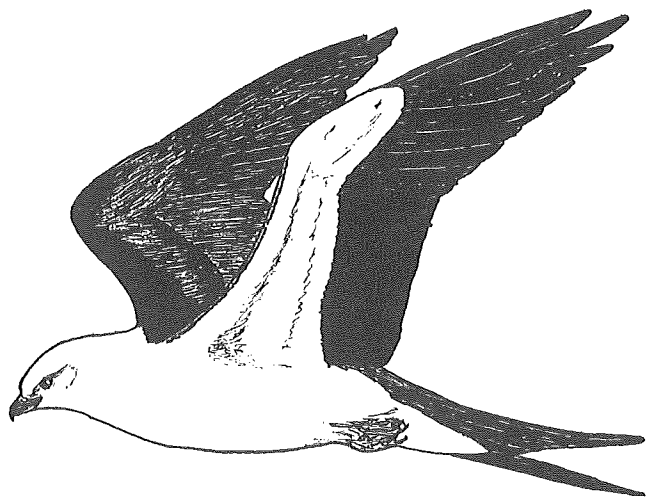
#### DIURNAL RAPTORS

The two days of the official spring hawk watch produced only 166 hawks. The total for all watches, official and unofficial, was 859 hawks, compared to last year's 518 and 1981's outstanding 2,210. The unfavorable spring weather was principally responsible for this rather poor showing.

The Turkey Vulture continues its increase: a remarkable 161 birds were reported, starting Mar. 17, when 1 was seen at Shelburne (JRA). Many areas reported firsts Mar. 20-27. Highs were: 4 on Mar. 25 at Roundy's Cove (WJN), 7 roosting in 1 tree on Apr. 11 at Thetford (RtR), 25 over Bristol Cliffs on Apr. 11 (JRA), 7 at Little Ascutey Mt. on May 1, and 6-7 feeding on carrion near Highgate Center on May 22 (NW). Nineteen were counted on hawk watches. There were other reports as far north as Duxbury and Missisquoi, and a nest with 2 eggs was found May 19 on the Vermont side of the border near Philipsburg, Quebec by Robert Galbraith, for Vermont's first documented nest and the state's second confirmed breeding record. Three separate areas reported Osprey firsts Apr. 6. Ospreys trickled through in early Apr., with a high of 8 on Apr. 8 at Fuller Mt. (MCD,JID). Other highs were: 11 on Apr. 16 at Herrick's Cove (WGE,NLM,et al.), 4 on Apr. 29 at Newport (FO,WS), and 3 on May 2 near Woodstock (JMN). Hawkwatchers tallied 17 Ospreys. The latest reports, all of singles, were May 18, May 19, and May 21. Altogether ca. 88 Ospreys

BARROW'S GOLDENEYE





AMERICAN SWALLOW-TAILED KITE

N. MARTIN

were reported, a good showing. A bird far from its southern haunts was an AMERICAN SWALLOW-TAILED KITE seen May 26 at Middlebury by Betty L. Rist and Marlene Dawson. This apparently represents Vermont's second report ever. There were 6 reports of the scarce Bald Eagle: 1 ad. Apr. 7 at Danbury (MMD,fide NS), 1 imm. Apr. 8 at Missisquoi (JNi), 1 imm. Apr. 27 at Button Bay (DLC), 1 imm. May 15-16 at N. Pomfret (DH,GN), 1 ad. May 20 at Dix Reservoir (ATA), and 1 imm. May 21-22 & 29 at Dead Creek (WRB,MJM,GMS,SBL,BLR). Ca. 64 Northern Harriers were reported, Mar. 6 onward. Most migratory movement came early Apr. to late May, with high counts of 4 on Apr. 2 near Ferrisburg (CJF, RHH) and 6 across northern Vermont on May 21 (WGE,NLM, GFE). A fine 27 were seen by hawkwatchers. Sharp-shinned Hawks, which overwintered, began increasing around mid-March, and there were scattered reports thereafter throughout the season, for a total of 64. The high count away from hawk watches was 6 seen along I-91 between Springfield and Vernon on Apr. 29 (WGE, NLM,SBL). Hawkwatchers accounted for an additional 83. A surprising 13 Cooper's Hawks were seen, reports scattered from Mar. 23 to May 21. A total of 20 Northern Goshawks was seen, plus 10 on hawkwatches. Twenty-four Red-shouldered Hawks were reported, beginning Apr. 1. Hawkwatchers tallied another 34. The first Broad-winged Hawk (1) did not appear until Apr. 22, the latest first report in the 10 years of these Records. Many areas did not report firsts until late Apr. or early May, apparently because Broad-wings simply stayed south waiting out the cold, wet weather. Ca. 300 birds were reported, with the high being an impressive 185 (223 hawks of all species) seen along I-91 between Weathersfield and Vernon on Apr. 29 (WGE, NLM,SBL), suggesting a possible migration route right up the Conn. R. Valley. Hawkwatchers added 95 more Broad-wings (other than the I-91 birds). Red-tailed Hawks, which overwinter in small numbers, began movement into Vermont by Mar. 5-7, when several observers reported firsts and when 12 were seen between Dead Creek and Shelburne on Mar. 6 (WRB,MJM). By late Mar. most areas had reported Red-tails, and unofficial hawk watches revealed that Red-tail movement was heavy in the first 9 days of April. Numbers were good, with 239 seen by hawkwatchers. Twenty-nine Rough-legged Hawks were seen Mar. 6 to May 13. Highs were 9 on Mar. 6 between Dead Creek and Shelburne (WRB,MJM) and 3 on May 6 at Shelburne (DLC). Three were seen from hawkwatches. Patricia A. Taber observed a GOLDEN EAGLE, rare anytime in Vt., near the D.A.R. Park in

Addison on Apr. 23. American Kestrels overwintered, at least in the Champlain Valley; migration began around Mar. 4, when 1 was seen in New Haven (KHD). Many areas reported firsts Mar. 16-Apr. 4. Highs were: 14 on Apr. 2, Rutland to N. Hero (RHH,CJF); 12 on Apr. 9, Chittenden and Grand Isle Counties (WGE, NLM); 6 on Apr. 10 in Salisbury (MBN); and 6 on May 19 in Starksboro and Hinesburg (WRB). Hawkwatchers counted 44. Numbers of resident birds seemed normal. Only 3 Merlin were reported: 1 found dead on the road Apr. 28 near L. Bomoseen (Tom French), and 1 seen Apr. 29 at Putney (WGE,NLM,SBL). A female was hit by a car near Castleton on Apr. 1 but died four days later (VINS rehab.). One additional hawkwatch bird was tallied. A single Peregrine Falcon was seen Mar. 25 at Burlington (MJM,WRB).

#### GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

A Ring-necked Pheasant, believed to have been locally released, was seen Apr. 30 in Cornwall (JSA,KMA). No Spruce Grouse were reported. Several observers reported Ruffed Grouse populations to be average. A nest with 9 eggs was found May 8 at Hartford (WGE). Twenty-seven Wild Turkeys were reported, with sightings as far north as Plainfield on Mar. 15 (CBA) and Missisquoi on May 20 (JDM). Northern Bobwhites seldom survive Vermont winters, so reports of 1 on May 20 & 23 at Woodstock probably represent a recent release (VB,LrB).

#### RAILS AND MOORHEN

Virginia Rails, which first appeared May 6 at WRM (WJN), were reported from 6 locations: W. Rutland (max. 5 on May 15, WGE), the Dead & Lewis Creek region (max. 7 on May 14, DLC), Howell's Pond in Arlington (max. 2 on May 15, WGE,NLM), the Intervale in Burlington ("HEARD", MAY 18, JDM), Whitney Creek in Addison (Max. 2 on May 21, JSA,KMA), and BRM in Newport (max. 2 on May 21, WGE et al.). The Sora was first reported Apr. 6 (1) at Missisquoi (TM,JNi), much earlier than usual. Next was a single Apr. 26 at WRM (LPS). Nine additional birds were reported, from Dead Creek, the BRM, and WRM. A least 24 Common Moorhens were reported, with the first May 7 (1) at WRM (WGE,NLM et al.), which was the max. there. There were also reports from Howell's Pond in Arlington (max. 2 on May 15), Dead Creek (max. 2 on May 21-22), East Creek in Addison (max. 3 on May 14), Mud Creek in Addison (max. 1 on May 21), and the BRM (max. 1 on May 21). No American Coots were reported.

#### SHOREBIRDS

The scarce in spring BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER was reported once: 5 south of Middlebury on May 28 by Jeffrey J. Allen. There were 2 reports of Semipalmated Plover: 1 on May 21 at Prouty Beach, Newport (WGE,GFE,NLM); and 1 on May 21 at Dead Creek (MJM, WRB). Six separate areas across Vt. reported Killdeer firsts Mar. 6. There were almost no other reports until Mar. 16-19, when another flood of reports came in. Maxima were 13 on Apr. 17 at Charlotte (DLC) and 12 on Apr. 18 at Plainfield (MFM). A pair had young at Dead Creek by May 24 (DLC). Numbers seemed normal. There were 12 reports of Greater Yellowlegs, Apr. 23 to May 22, for a total of 23 birds. The high count was 8 on May 9 on the Lemon Fair R. (JSA,KMA). The Lesser Yellowlegs was reported thrice: 1 on May 13 at Plainfield (MFM), 6 on May 13 at Shoreham (DLC), and 1 on May 21 at Weybridge (DLC). The earliest Solitary Sandpiper was 1 on Apr. 30 at Norwich (CF). Sixty-one others were seen, May 2-31, an average showing. For the first spring since cold 1975, Spotted Sandpipers

failed to appear until May (firsts May 1 at Clarendon, Lemon Fair R., and Colchester). Numbers seemed average thereafter, with highs of 10 on May 7 at West Haven (WGE,NLM,et al.) and 8 on May 21 around Island Pond (WGE,GFE,NLM). Twenty Upland Sandpipers were found, with the first on Apr. 28 along the Lemon Fair (JSA,KMA). Other areas reporting Uplands were Shelburne, Winooski, Williston, Woodstock, Shoreham, Addison, and Newport. Only 1 observer reported Semipalmated Sandpipers: May 14, 5 at Pantton; and May 21, 3 at Pantton (DLC). Ca. 134 Least Sandpipers were tallied in 9 different sightings, May 11-21. The high was 61 on May 12 at Essex Jct. (JDM). There was but one report of the Pectoral Sandpiper: 2 on May 14 at Prouty Beach in Newport (REG). As previously reported, 3 Common Snipe appeared early on Feb. 26 in Clarendon (CJF). They were still there Mar. 5. A few birds braved the adverse April weather, e.g. 1 on Apr. 1 at Colchester, 1 on Apr. 8 at Missisquoi, 1 on Apr. 9 at Burlington, and 1 on Apr. 10 at Weybridge. But many areas did not report firsts until Apr. 13-22. The high counts were 13 in the Island Pond area and 9 in the Newport area on May 21 (WGE,GFE,NLM). The first American Woodcock reports (of singles) were Mar. 17 at Manchester (ME) and at Snake Mt. (JSA,KMA). Moretown had 1 on Mar. 23 (VG,fide MFM), and Woodstock on Mar. 28 (EH), but most areas did not report firsts until the first half of April, doubtless due to adverse March and April weather holding birds back. High counts were 4 on Apr. 1 at Missisquoi (TM,JNi) and 18 on May 21 in the Island Pond area (WGE,GFE,NLM). Numbers seemed down to two observers in the west-central and southwest parts of the state.

#### GULLS AND TERNS

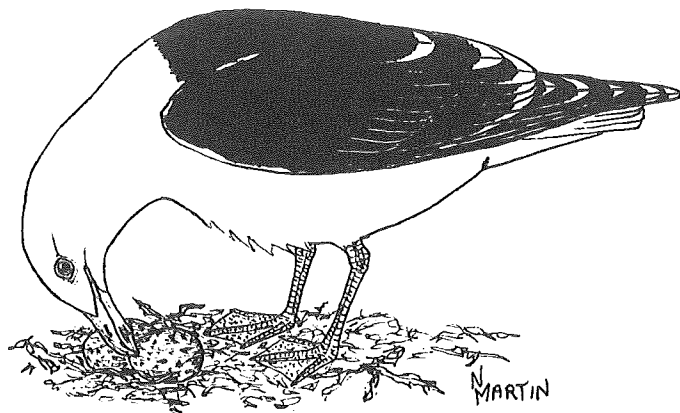
Bonaparte's Gull reports were: Apr. 17, 3 at the Tritown Water District plant on L. Champlain (JSA, KMA); Apr. 18, 4 at Long Point (DLC); Apr. 27, 1 at Long Point (DLC); and May 9, 1 on Caspian L. (CF). Ring-billed Gulls, which overwintered in small numbers along L. Champlain, showed a rapid buildup by mid-March. Indicative high counts are: 18 on Mar. 1 at Blodgett's Beach in Burlington (DLC); 37 in Burlington and 30 on Grand Isle on Mar. 5 (WGE,NLM); 500+ on Mar. 27 in Addison Co. (WGE,NLM); and 1,000+ on Apr. 28 in the Champlain Islands (DLC). (On Mar. 25 3,000+ gulls of unsorted species were seen from Burlington's waterfront, WRB,MJM). Herring Gull high counts were 210 at Burlington and 30 on Grand Isle on Mar. 5, and 332 at Burlington on Apr. 19 (WGE,NLM). A bird possessing all the characteristics of a first-winter THAYER'S GULL was seen at Blodgett's Beach in Burlington on Mar. 5 (WGE,NLM). The Records Committee decided to defer a decision on this record pending review by experts familiar with the species. At least 2 Iceland Gulls were seen in the Burlington area Mar. 1 to May 1. They could have been the same individuals or a series of Icelanders passing through. A single Glaucous Gull was seen May 1 at S. Burlington (DLC). Small numbers of Great Black-backed Gulls were present along L. Champlain throughout the season, with high counts of 48 at Burlington and 5 on Grand Isle on Mar. 5 (WGE,NLM), 28 from Benson to Addison on Mar. 16 (WGE,NLM,JPM), and 7 on the South Bay of L. Memphremagog on May 21 (DLC). A few were also seen at Herrick's Cove. But the big news was the first Vermont nesting of Black-backed, established May 21 when Richard B. and Dorothy K. Lavalley found a pair on a nest with 2 eggs on Young Island (extensively photographed). An IVORY GULL reported Mar. 3 at the S. Burlington landfill by Patricia A. Taber was accepted for the state hypothetical list. This constitutes the second Vt. sighting. Only 88 Common Terns were reported, May 14-22, from Popasquash Island, Swanton, St. Albans, Colchester,

Burlington, and L. Benoseen. The Black Tern was more widely reported, though all reports came from along L. Champlain except for 12 at BRM at Newport on May 21 (WGE,GFE,NLM) and a pair seen mating at Herrick's Cove on May 23 (MEC). The seasonal firsts were 2 on May 1 at Button Bay (DLC). Numbers seemed average (seasonal high 22 from Burlington to Dead Creek on May 21, MJM, WRB).

#### DOVES THROUGH KINGFISHER

By all appearances, numbers of Rock Doves seem unchanged. Mourning Doves overwintered in many areas, but several locations noticed returns around the first week of March. Highs were 13 on Mar. 22 at Ferrisburg (MCD,JID), 21 on May 4 at Shoreham (ELW), and "35-40 at a time" in May at Randolph (EWC,MCC). Numbers generally seemed average. No Yellow-billed Cuckoos and only 1 Black-billed Cuckoo were reported: a single May 17 at Springweather (WJN). Eastern Screech-Owl reports were: May 15, 1 at Albany, where it is quite rare (TP); May 21, 1 at Dead Creek (WGE,NLM,GFE); and May 21, 1 at Weybridge (JMN). Thirteen Great Horned Owls were reported. On Apr. 2 a nest was discovered in Colchester; an Apr. snow storm destroyed the nest, but the parents and 2 fledglings survived; the young were still present May 13 (JJA). Two Snowy Owls were reported: 1 imm. Mar. 3, 5, & 6 in Burlington (JJA); and 1 on Mar. 8 at Landgrove (EP). Ca. 20 Barred Owls were reported from widely scattered locations. One Long-eared Owl was reported, May 7 at Peru (WJN). Two Short-eared Owls were seen: 1 on Apr. 22 at Missisquoi (TM,JNi), and 1 on Apr. 30 in S. Burlington (CMC). There were 6 reports of Northern Saw-whet Owls: 2 on Mar. 16 and 1 on Apr. 5 in Westford (MJM); 1 on Apr. 3 in Shelburne (JJA); 1 on May 15, 22, & 27 in Albany (TP); 1 on May 21 at Winhall (WJN); and 1 on May 21 at Moose Bog in Ferdinand (WGE,GFE,NLM). Two Common Nighthawks seen May 4 at Rutland were the earliest since 1976's record first of Apr. 27. Twenty-five birds were reported in May, with a high of ca. 10 at Burlington May 22 (JJA). There were 5 reports of Whip-poor-will: May 8, 2 at Benson (CJF); May 21, 5 near Island Pond (WGE,GFE,NLM); May 22, 1 in E. Charlotte (JJA); May 24, 1 in Colchester (WDB); and May 27, 1 on Snake Mt. (JSA,KMA). Chimney Swifts first appeared on Apr. 28, 3 in Burlington (DLC); on Apr. 29 (records from Rutland and Woodstock); and on Apr. 30 (from Albany). High counts were 55+ on May 10 at Burlington (JJA), and 50+ on May 24 at Woodstock village

#### GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL





(JMN). A Ruby-throated Hummingbird May 2 at Bellow's Falls (MEC) is the earliest (by 1 day) ever reported to these Records. Three other southern areas reported firsts May 5-8, but a flood of first reports (doubtless indicating a big hummer movement) came May 14-17. Numbers seemed fairly good, with highs of 4 on May 24 at Ferrisburg (MCD,JID) and 6 on May 27 at Woodstock (JMN). Six Belted Kingfishers were reported in March (Mar. 5-27), but many areas located firsts Apr. 8-14, and the seasonal high was 8+ at Herrick's Cove on Apr. 16 (WGE,NLM). At Ferrisburg, kingfishers were absent from several customary haunts, probably because high water flooded breeding sites (MCD,JID).

#### WOODPECKERS

At least 24 Red-headed Woodpeckers were reported, May 8-24, by far the best count ever received for the Records. Though most reports were from the Champlain Valley, individuals in Plainfield, Norwich, Barnard, Stockbridge, Chester, and Manchester Center were notable. The first Yellow-bellied Sapsucker on Apr. 12 at Pawlet (MHR), and the second Apr. 16 at Crafts-bury (FO). The paucity of reports thereafter (ca. 62 reported) is probably due more to carelessness in reporting than an actual decline in sapsucker numbers. Though two observers (central and southwest) considered Hairy Woodpeckers a bit less common than usual, there was no consensus on population trends in either Hairy or Downy Woodpecker. An aberrant Hairy Woodpecker with buff replacing normally white areas was seen and photographed May 31 in E. Barnard (PW). The Black-backed Woodpecker was reported twice: 1 on May 21 in Brunswick (WGE,GFE,NLM); and a pr. in Wolcott's Bear Swamp, where they may have bred, in late May (SY, DS, et al.). Though a vanguard of Northern Flickers appeared Mar. 5-11 (4 seen at 4 locations), most areas did not report first arrivals until mid-April, no doubt because early spring storms held migrants back. High counts were 9 in the Burlington area on Apr. 30 (JDM) and 15 at Herrick's Cove on May 5 (WJN). Numbers seemed average. Ca. 50 of the wary and inconspicuous Pileated Woodpeckers were reported; populations seemed normal.

#### FLYCATCHERS

Seven Olive-sided Flycatchers were reported, May 19-29. The earliest Eastern Wood-Pewees were singles May 15 at Ferrisburg (MCD,JID), and N. Pownal (WGE, NLM), and May 19 at East Creek (RHH). Apparently Pewees arrived en masse Apr. 20-23, when many areas reported firsts. There were 3 reports of the late-arriving Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, all of single birds: May 19 at Albany (TP), May 21 at Brunswick (WGE,NLM,GFE), and May 21 in S. Burlington (DLC). The Alder Flycatcher was reported a bit earlier than usual--1 on May 14 at Ferrisburg (MCD,JID). There were only 6 birds reported thereafter. Eight reports of Willow Flycatcher were submitted, totaling ca. 13 individuals. One which sang once in migration on May 11 at Crafts-bury (FO) was the earliest ever by 4 days; the next reported this spring was May 21. A nice high count of 6 was made at Weybridge on May 30 (MBN). The earliest Least Flycatcher since 1975 was one on Apr. 30 at Albany (TP); Middlebury had 1 on May 1 (KHD). Seven areas had firsts May 4-8, making this a rather early spring for Leasts. High counts were 4 on May 4 at L. Dummore (WME), 10 on May 11 at Huntington (JJA), 10 on May 21 near Island Pond (WGE,GFE,NLM), and 15-17 in one 10-acre area at Crafts-bury on May 25 (FO). The first Eastern Phoebe was found Mar. 25 at Herrick's Cove (WJN), followed by 2 on Snake Mt. Apr. 2 (JSA, KMA). Six areas reported firsts Apr. 6-9, and 6 areas firsts Apr. 11-18, indicating that phoebes are indi-

vidually variable in timing of spring return. Other areas did not record firsts until late Apr. or early May. The high was 12 seen Apr. 16 at Herrick's Cove (WGE,NLM). Two Great Crested Flycatchers May 4 in S. Burlington (DLC) were the 2nd earliest ever reported to these Records. A good movement into southern and central portions apparently occurred May 7-8 as 4 areas reported firsts then, and Benson had a high count of 9 on May 8 (CJF). There is a hiatus in the reports, and then another spate of first reports May 12-14. Highs of 3-4 were 4 times reported, May 14-21. The earliest Eastern Kingbird was 1 on Apr. 29 at Hartland (WGE). Five areas (as far north as Troy--FO, WS,JW) reported firsts on May 1. Numbers seemed average to lower than normal, with a high of 7 on May 14 at Dead Creek (DLC).

#### LARKS AND SWALLOWS

Ca. 110 Horned Larks were reported, Mar. 1 to May 29. This is a species that may be seen throughout the year in Vermont as flocks overwinter and small numbers breed here. A Purple Martin in Colchester Apr. 9 (WGE,NLM, et al.) was the earliest ever reported (by 7 days). Even the 2nd report on Apr. 14, 2 at Weybridge (MBN), topped previous earliest reports. High counts were 8 on Apr. 29 in Ferrisburg (MCD,JID), 8 on May 30 at Dead Creek (LPS), and 26 on May 31 at Weybridge (MBN). Three Tree Swallows at Starksboro Mar. 16 (WRB) were the earliest since 1978. No others were seen until Apr. 6. Many areas reported firsts Apr. 6-9, with a high of 500+ on Apr. 7 at Long Point (MCD, JID). Other highs were 200+ on Apr. 18 at Button Bay (DLC), several thousand on May 10 at Middlebury (JRA), ca. 400 on May 11 at Herrick's Cove (WJN), and 400-500 on May 12 at Shelburne (WRB). Dead Creek had 5 Northern Rough-winged Swallows on Apr. 24 (WGE,NLM), the season's firsts. Ca. 53 were seen scattered throughout the season, with never more than 5 at one time. The Bank Swallow first appeared Apr. 24, 3 at Dead Creek (WGE,NLM), and 5-6 reached Newport by Apr. 30 (FO,WS). Highs were 50 at New Haven May 8 (KHD), 200+ at Herrick's Cove May 11 (WJN), and 60-70 at Shelburne May 12 (JJA). A Cliff Swallow Apr. 28 at N. Hero (DLC) was the earliest; there were 14 reports thereafter. Highs were: 7 at Clarendon May 6 (LPS), 16 at Rutland May 21 (WJN), and 7+ at Woodstock May 22 (JMN). Barn Swallows were about on time, with 12+ the first on Apr. 16 in Cambridge (JGG,RYG). Many areas reported firsts Apr. 23-30. Highs were: 30 at Dead Creek Apr. 24 (WGE,NLM), 150+ Albany to Newport Apr. 30 (FO,WS), 100+ in Shelburne May 12 (WRB), 200 at Herrick's Cove May 17 (WJN), and "hundreds" in Bristol May 31 (JRA).

#### CORVIDS THROUGH CREEPERS

Gray Jays were twice reported: 7 on May 18 at Moose Bog in Ferdinand (DLC), and 2 on May 21 at Moose Bog (DLC,WGE,GFE,NLM). Blue Jay numbers seemed good. Many areas reported 10-15 birds at a time at feeders in March; during breeding season daily reports of 3-5 were average; and in May larger numbers (up to 12 many places) reappeared. Though American Crows overwinter in many areas, no less than 6 locations reported firsts on Mar. 1, with 4 other areas locating firsts Mar. 3-6. There is clear evidence of this movement north: 120 on Mar. 3 "migrating NE" in Ferrisburg (MCD,JID); "crows were flying north in fairly orderly fashion Mar. 5" in Middlebury (KHD); 300+ "in migration by the house" in E. Charlotte on Mar. 7 (DLC); and "large numbers--probably in thousands--moving from south at small steady flow observed from Dead Creek to Burlington" Mar. 6 (WRB,MJM). A crow was collecting nesting material in Proctor on Mar. 19 (RWP). Over 65

Common Ravens were reported, with highs of 6 on May 18 near Island Pond (DLC), 8 on May 21 in Ferdinand (WGE, GFE, NLM), and 7 on May 29 in Starksboro (WRB, MJM). A bird was sitting on a nest in Benson on Mar. 16 (WGE, NLM, JPM); and a nest with 4 young ready to fledge was found May 3 at Waterbury Reservoir (TRL). Many observers reported 10-15 Black-capped Chickadees coming to feeders in March and April. At Woodstock 18 were banded for the season. Two observers recorded first gathering of nesting material on May 13 (FO, LPS). There were 4 reports of Boreal Chickadee, all from the Northeast Kingdom: 2 in E. Craftsbury (date lost--FO); 2 on May 11 in Albany (TP); 6 on May 18 in Island Pond (DLC); and 6-10 on May 21 in Island Pond (DLC, WGE, GFE, NLM). Thirty-four Tufted Titmice were reported, far more than the previous (1979) spring high of 18. Betty Allen observed a pair nesting in a bird house in Fair Haven; the male sang for a month before a female arrived on Mar. 22; on May 10 one was seen flying out of the nest box; by June 2 a baby was heard. Ca. 60 Red-breasted Nuthatches were reported, many of them from feeders in March and April. Birds left feeders in White River Jct. ca. Apr. 17 (WGE) and in Brownsville Apr. 13 (JEH, BMH). The high count was 5 near Island Pond on May 18 (DLC). White-breasted Nuthatch numbers seemed average, with high counts of 3-4. Only 1 was banded at Woodstock; and a bird was collecting red juniper bark for nesting on Apr. 13 in Proctor (RWP). Ca. 60 Brown Creepers were reported, and Bill Norse considered them "much scarcer than formerly." Two very active observers (WGE, NLM) found only 12 for the season, with a high of 3 on Apr. 16 on Gile Mt. in Norwich. The high count for the season was 7 at Knapp Brook Ponds on May 1 (CF).

#### WRENS

No Carolina Wrens were reported. Here's how Carolina spring reports go, 1973 to 1983: 0, 1, 1, 2, 2, 0, 0, 2, 1, 0, 0. The first House Wren was Apr. 28, 1 in Ferrisburg (MCD, JID). Several areas reported firsts May 3-8. House Wrens were seen north to Woodstock in the interior and to Burlington along L. Champlain, with high counts of 5 on May 24 at Shoreham (ELW), and 8 on May 31 in Weybridge (MBN). About 62 birds were reported in all. The Winter Wren was first reported (1 or 2) Apr. 8 in Starksboro (WRB). Only 32 were reported this spring. The high was 10 on May 21 in Ferdinand, where they breed in good numbers (WGE, GFE, NLM). A SEDGE WREN seen May 22 at Dead Creek by Jean R. Arrowsmith was only the third ever reported in the spring. The Marsh Wren was first seen May 6 (2) at WRM (WJN). High counts by area were: 20 at WRM May 15 (WGE, NLM); 5 at Herrick's Cove May 15 (WGE, NLM); 6 at Whitney Creek May 21 (JSA, KMA); 10 at Dead Creek May 21 (MCD, JID); 1-2 at Burlington's Intervale May 21 (WRB, MJM); and 4 at BRM in Newport May 21 (WGE, GFE, NLM).

#### KINGLETS THROUGH THRUSHES

Golden-crowned Kinglets still seem quite scarce, with several active observers missing them and with only ca. 40 birds reported. The high was 13 in Ferdinand, where they breed, on May 21 (WGE, GFE, NLM). The Ruby-crowned Kinglet, which does not ordinarily overwinter, first appeared Apr. 16, 1 in Hartford (WGE, NLM). Several area firsts were reported Apr. 21-May 1. Highs were: 21 on an hour's walk in Woodstock Apr. 17 (ALG), ca. 10 in Woodstock Apr. 30 (JMN), and 11 in Centennial Woods in Burlington May 14 (DLC). Ca. 40 Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were reported, continuing their increase. The first was 1 in Bellows Falls Apr. 27 (MEC), and the high count was 9 in W. Haven May 7, where a nest was ca. 3/4 completed on

that date (WGE, NLM, et al.). Adults were feeding young on a nest in Bennington May 23 (RGD). Eastern Bluebirds definitely seem to be doing better; the ca. 72 birds reported, Mar. 17 onwards, is an improvement, and many areas (especially in the north) reported the best breeding in at least 10 years. As usual birds arrived very irregularly, with some pairs not beginning breeding until well into May. A bit earlier than usual was a Veery May 1 in Weathersfield (CF). Many areas reported firsts May 3-14, and the highs were recorded after breeding birds were back on territories: 13 on May 21 in Ferdinand (WGE, GFE, NLM), and 25 on May 25 at Herrick's Cove (WJN). As usual, there were few Gray-cheeked Thrush reports: May 22 & 23, 1 in Winhall (WJN); and May 31, 1 banded at Woodstock (VINS). A Swainson's Thrush May 9 in the Burlington area (JDM) was the second earliest ever. There were but 12 reports submitted, with high counts of 8 on May 18 near Island Pond (DLC), and 6 on May 28 in Averill (CF). The first Hermit Thrush was 1 on Apr. 19 at a feeder in Bristol during a snowstorm (JRA). They seemed to trickle through in April and then to move in larger numbers beginning ca. May 1. Highs were 5 on Apr. 23 in Winhall (WJN) and 13 in Ferdinand on May 21 (WGE, GFE, NLM). Wood Thrushes were about on schedule, with firsts May 1 in Winhall (WJN) and May 2 in Weathersfield (ELW). Numbers seemed still low to several observers (MBN, PAT, FO). The high was 7 in Ferdinand May 21 (WGE, GFE, NLM). American Robins do overwinter sparsely, but 1 on Feb. 15 in Berlin (BBu) could have been a returning bird. Several areas recorded first arrivals in small numbers Mar. 3-9; then there was a gap before more first reports Mar. 14-20. Highs were: 20 on Mar. 25 on Snake Mt. (JSA, KMA), 25 on Mar. 31 in Burlington (JDM), 311 on Apr. 17 in E. Charlotte (DLC), 530 on Apr. 17 at L. Morey and 550 on Apr. 18 in Woodstock (WGE, NLM). On May 13 a nest with 2 eggs fell from a tree in E. Craftsbury (FO), and a bird was on eggs in Weybridge May 31 (MBN).

#### MIMIDS THROUGH STARLING

A Gray Catbird Apr. 23 in Ferrisburg was the earliest (by 1 day) ever reported to the Records (MCD, JID). Many areas had firsts May 3-9, and numbers seemed normal. Ca. 21 Northern Mockingbirds were reported, Mar. 16 onwards, with birds returning to more northerly areas mid-March through mid-April. Most were found in the Champlain Valley. On Apr. 24 two Brown Thrashers were found in Hancock and Weybridge (WGE, NLM), and 1 reached Craftsbury by Apr. 26 (FO, DAM). Many areas had firsts May 1-7. The highs were 6 at Woodstock May 3, and 7 at Island Pond May 21 (WGE, et al.). The Water Pipit was reported 5 times: 3 on Mar. 6 at Plainfield (MEM); ca. 20 on May 1 at New Haven (KHD); 1 on May 7 at Rutland (CJF); 1 on May 9 in Middlebury (KHD); and 1 on May 10 in Woodstock (WGE). The scarce Bohemian Waxwing was reported twice: 2 on Mar. 7 & 8 in Londonderry (SDA), and 2 on Apr. 19 in Starksboro (WRB). Cedar Waxwings overwinter in some areas, and 7 reports in March could represent resident or returning birds. In any case, Waxwings were relatively scarce until April. Highs were 30+ on Mar. 12 in Woodstock (WGE, NLM), 40 on Mar. 28 in Middlebury (MBN), and 150 on Apr. 8 in Essex Jct. (JDM). Three Northern Shrikes were reported: Mar. 19 & 26, 1 near Sand Bar WMA (JDM); Apr. 6, 1 on Snake Mt. (JSA, KMA); and 1 without date in the Middlebury area (KHD). European Starling numbers seemed as high as ever, alas. The Solitary Vireo did not appear until Apr. 28 (1 at Woodstock, WGE, and 1 at Winhall, WJN), 8-11 days later than usual. Movement seemed good Apr. 28-May 7. Highs were 4 on several occasions after Apr. 29, and 9 on May 21 in Ferdinand (WGE et

al.). A solitary was sitting on a nest in Londonderry by May 22 (SDA). Ca. 27 Yellow-throated Vireos were reported, May 7 onwards, as far north as Woodstock and Sand Bar WMA. A Warbling Vireo May 3 at Woodstock (WGE,NLM) was about on time for the seasonal first. Many areas reported firsts May 10-14, and highs were in the range of 6-12 per day. A Philadelphia Vireo May 3 in S. Burlington (DLC) was the earliest ever reported by 2 days. Other reports were: 1 in Albany May 25 (TP); and 1 in Middlebury May 25 (KHD). Early was a Red-eyed Vireo May 1 at Westford (MJM). No more were reported until May 13, immediately after which many areas reported first arrivals. They were not much in evidence, however, until the fourth week of May. The high count was 8 on May 21 at Herrick's Cove and Springweather (WJN).

#### WARBLERS

A warbler of either Blue- or Golden-winged persuasion was heard briefly on May 7 in W. Haven (WGE,NLM, et al.), an early date. There were seven Blue-winged Warbler reports: 1 on May 12 at Grafton (NEC); 1 m. on May 15 at Ira (WGE,NLM); reports on Birdathon Day May 21: 1 at W. Rutland (LPS), 1 in Weathersfield (VHF), 1 in Saxtons River (CDK,DJK), and 1 in Ira (SBL, BLR, LHP, JMN, ALG); and 1 on May 24 in W. Rutland (DLC). The Golden-winged Warbler was reported at 7 locations: May 14, 1 at Middlebury (MBN); May 15, 2 in Ira (WGE,NLM); May 18, 1 at E. Charlotte (DLC); six reports Birdathon Day May 21: Saxtons River (CDK, DJK), E. Charlotte (DD,DLC), Ira (SBL,BLR,LHP,JMN,ALG, EE), W. Haven in a location where Brewster's have been the past 3 years (SBL,LHP,BLR), Williston (ECA), and W. Rutland (LPS); and May 24, 5 in W. Rutland (DLC). "Brewster's Warblers" (a hybrid between Blue-winged and Golden-winged) were reported May 14 and 21 in E. Charlotte (DLC,DD); and on May 21 in Williston (ECA). The first Tennessee Warblers were singles May 10 in Burlington (DLC) and Addison (RHH). The real push came May 20-25, with highs of 5 at Calais May 20 (FO), 14 in Addison May 24 (RHH), and 6 in Craftsbury May 25 (FO). Nashville Warblers first appeared May 3 in several areas, and many areas had firsts May 7. High counts were all from breeding areas near Island Pond (e.g., 32 on May 21, WGE et al.). Northern Parulas showed up about when expected, with 1 at Woodstock on May 4 (CF). Few were reported, with highs of 3 on May 15 in Craftsbury (FO), and 13 on May 21 in Ferdinand (WGE,GFE,NLM). A Yellow Warbler May 1 in Weathersfield (CF) was a bit early as 8 areas reported firsts May 3-4. Yellows reached Duxbury by May 7 (FAP) and Craftsbury by May 8 (FO). Numbers seemed average, with several one-day highs of 20-50 reported. A Chestnut-sided Warbler Apr. 26 in Albany was the earliest ever reported by 4 days. There were a few reports May 1-7, but the real wave apparently came beginning May 8. Highs were 4-14. A Magnolia Warbler May 7 in Winhall (WJN) was the seasonal first; many areas had firsts May 8. High counts were 17 in 1 tree (!) May 15 in Addison (RHH), and 29 in Ferdinand May 21 (WGE,GFE,NLM). Ca. 53 Cape May Warblers were reported, May 7-28, a good count. Highs were: 6 on May 11, Middlebury (KHD); ca. 15 on May 15 in Craftsbury and Greensboro (FO,JW); and 8 on May 21 in Ferdinand, where they breed (WGE,GFE,NLM). A Black-throated Blue Warbler on Apr. 30 at E. Creek (RHH) was the second earliest ever. Other areas had firsts May 4-14. Highs were 7 on May 15 in N. Pownal, and 8 on May 21 in Ferdinand (WGE,GFE,NLM). A Yellow-rumped Warbler Apr. 18 in Woodstock (WGE,NLM) was the season's first, with none thereafter until Apr. 25. The first real wave came Apr. 29-May 1. Highs were: 18, May 1 in Woodstock (WGE,NLM); 15, May 4 in Fayston (FAP); 20, May 7 near Burlington (JDM); and 25, May 21 in Ferdin-

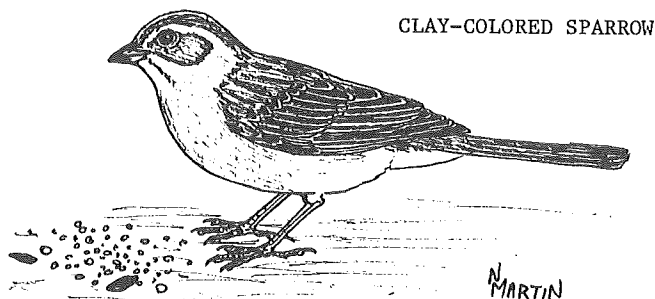
and (WGE et al.). Two Black-throated Green Warblers Apr. 30 at E. Creek (RHH) were the year's first, with none thereafter until May 3, when 3 areas reported firsts. Highs were: 5 on May 8 at Hartford (WGE), 6 on May 14 at E. Middlebury (MBN), and 5 on May 18 in Burlington (DLC). A Blackburnian Warbler on May 4 in Burlington (DLC) preceded the first wave of arrivals which came May 7-8. The snow storm of May 8-10 apparently delayed or even eliminated birds, for none were reported thereafter until after May 14. Highs were: 3 on May 14 at Middlebury (MBN), and 11 on May 21 in Ferdinand (WGE et al.). Pine Warblers were poorly reported, with 13 seen, May 4 to the end of the season. No more than 2 were reported at a time. A Prairie Warbler May 1 in White River Jct. was the earliest (by 10 days) ever reported to the Records (MJC). There were 5 other reports: May 14, 4+ in Woodstock, and May 17, 1 in Woodstock (WGE,NLM); May 21, 1 in Saxtons River (CDK,DJK); May 22, 2 in Woodstock (JMN); and May 31, 1 in Springfield Meadows (WJN). The rather scarce Palm Warbler was reported 7 times, Apr. 27-May 20, for a total of 15 birds. The high was 4 seen Apr. 27 at Herrick's Cove (WJN). A Bay-breasted Warbler May 6 at Herrick's Cove (WJN) was the earliest (by 2 days) ever reported to the Records and far ahead of the average mid-May arrival date. No more were seen until May 19, with the real movement coming May 21-25. Thirty birds were reported, with a high of 8-10 on May 24 in Middlebury (KHD). Ca. 28 Blackpoll Warblers were reported, May 20-29, about as expected. Four parties reported Cerulean Warblers at the Sand Bar WMA breeding site, May 14 & 21. As many as 5 birds were present at once. The Black-and-white Warbler was a bit later than usual, with one Apr. 28 in Albany the first (TP). But many areas reported firsts Apr. 29-May 3. High counts were: 4 on Apr. 30 in Norwich (CF); 10 on May 8 in Charlotte (JJA); and 11 on May 21 in Ferdinand (WGE et al.). An American Redstart May 1 in New Haven (KHD) was the earliest ever for the Records, by 3 days, followed by first reports May 3 at both Herrick's Cove and Weston. Most areas reported firsts May 7-15, and high counts were: 7 on May 15 in Huntington (DLC); 7 on May 20 around Burlington (JDM); and 24 on May 21 in the Island Pond area (WGE et al.). Many areas reported Ovenbird first arrivals May 2-10; then, following the May snowstorm, there were very few reports until May 14, suggesting that ovenbirds may have perished. The high was 15 on May 21 near Island Pond (WGE et al.). Tied for the second earliest ever was a Northern Waterthrush Apr. 30 at Newport (FO,WS). There was 1 on May 4 on Snake Mt. (JSA,KMA), but the real push into Vermont began May 7. Highs were 7 on May 21 in Ferdinand (WGE et al.) and 11 on May 29 in Holland (CF). There were 6 reports (9 individuals) of Louisiana Waterthrush, May 1-23, all from south to south-central areas. A Mourning Warbler May 14 in Winhall (WJN) was the second earliest ever. Only 12 were seen thereafter, May 24-26. The earliest ever by 8 days was a Common Yellowthroat Apr. 21 in S. Strafford (HR). Many areas reported firsts Apr. 30-May 6, and high counts were in the 10-30 range. There were 16 reports of Wilson's Warblers May 11-25, totaling 18 birds, a fairly good showing. Canada Warblers drifted in, with first reports May 12-20. They seemed scarce to Bill Norse, and highs of 3-4 were seen on 3 occasions.

#### TANAGER THROUGH SNOW BUNTING

A Scarlet Tanager May 1 at S. Strafford (HR) was the second earliest ever. There were no more reported until May 8; and in Waitsfield the May snowstorm drove 1 to a bird feeder, along with an Indigo Bunting and a Bobolink (HEH). That same storm apparently held back Tanagers as only 2 more were seen until real movement began May 13. Highs were 3 on May 14 at N. Westmin-



ster (MEC), and 5+ on May 15 at N. Pownal (WGE,NLM). Ca. 120 Northern Cardinals were reported. Two Rose-breasted Grosbeaks Apr. 29 in Woodstock (JMN) were the second earliest ever reported. Two areas had firsts May 3, and 1 came to a feeder for sunflower seed May 5-31 in Ferrisburg (MCD,JID). Substantial movement seemed to begin May 7. Highs were: 5 on May 13 in Burlington's Centennial Woods (DLC), 6 on May 15 in Cambridge (JGG,RYG), and 10 on May 21 from Herrick's Cove to Winhall (WJN). Also the second earliest ever was a male Indigo Bunting Apr. 29 in Pomfret (LS), followed by singles May 2, 7, & 8. Most first reports came May 12-20, however. There were several reports of Indigos at feeders, including the seasonal high count of 4 m. at a feeder in Hartford during the last week of May (WGE). At Apr. 28th, 2 Rufous-sided Towhees reports were the latest firsts ever submitted to the Records. Several areas had firsts Apr. 30-May 1, and highs were only 2 per day. American Tree Sparrow numbers seemed average, and several last sightings Apr. 20-28 were submitted. Two Chipping Sparrows Mar. 16 at Missisquoi (TM,JNI) were the season's first, and few were reported thereafter until Apr. 16-17, when there were 3 firsts in south and central sections. Then there were no more reports until Apr. 23-May 4, when the principal influx



CLAY-COLORED SPARROW

apparently occurred. On May 5 Kristine M. and Jim S. Andrews saw and photographed a CLAY-COLORED SPARROW at their bird feeder in Bridport. This is the first documented state record. (There was a sight record on May 12, 1978). A Field Sparrow Mar. 24 at a feeder in Westford (MJM) was fairly early, with none thereafter until Apr. 2 when 1 was heard at Dead Creek (JRA). A good count of 4-5 was made Apr. 10 in Shelburne (DFP) and then there were none until the major influx beginning Apr. 17. The high count was 10+ in Woodstock May 14 (WGE,NLM). Twenty-three Vesper Sparrows were reported, Apr. 17-May 21, with highs of 3 twice: Apr. 17 in Colchester (JDM), and May 6 in Woodstock (WGE, NLM). Savannah Sparrows burst upon the scene with 8 in Woodstock Apr. 18 (WGE,NLM); 5 at Dead Creek Apr. 21 (JID,MCD). Savannahs reached Newport by Apr. 30 (1--FO,WS), and the high was 16 at Dead Creek on Apr. 24 (WGE,NLM). Eight Grasshopper Sparrows were reported, May 4-29, all from Champlain Valley areas, as follows: 1 house cat kill in Shelburne; 1 from Winookski's Pine Island Rd.; and 6 from the Dead Creek area. Twenty-nine Fox Sparrows were reported, Apr. 4-28, as they moved through Vermont to breeding areas farther north. Fox Sparrows were late arriving as they usually first appear in March. Song Sparrows, which overwinter in small numbers, began to return early in March, and Rutland had 5 by Mar. 19 (CJF). Numbers seemed good, as usual (e.g., 10 at WRM Apr. 8--WJN). Only 20 Lincoln's Sparrows were reported, May 3 (the 2nd earliest ever) to May 24, with a high of 12 in Brighton and Ferdinand on May 21 (WGE et al.). Not reported until Apr. 26 (3 at WRM--LPS), Swamp Sparrows were the latest they've been for these 10 years. Sample maximum counts: 4 in WRM May 21 (LPS), 2 at Herrick's Cove Apr. 27 (WJN), 3 at Lewis Creek May 3

(MJM), and 20 in the Island Pond area May 21 (WGE et al.) A White-throated Sparrow Apr. 11 led the pack, with many observers reporting firsts Apr. 14-19. Numbers seemed good, and highs were: 30 on Apr. 30 in Ferrisburg (MCD,JID), 35 on May 1 in Hinesburg (JDM), 150+ on May 13 in Colchester (JJA), and 57 on May 21 in the Island Pond area (WGE et al.). A White-crowned Sparrow Apr. 7 in Ferrisburg (JID,MCD) was extraordinarily early, topping the previous first by 12 days. None were seen thereafter until May 1-4, when 6 areas had firsts. Highs were 7 in two locations on May 10. Several final reports for May 21 were submitted. Dark-eyed Juncos not infrequently overwinter, and some areas had them all through March; but a movement of Juncos back into the state clearly occurred Mar. 15-17, when several areas reported first arrivals and when up to 17 were seen in one area. Numbers seemed average thereafter, building to highs of 75 on Apr. 10 in Shrewsbury (LPS), 60 on Apr. 11 at E. Creek (RHH), 105 on Apr. 17 in E. Charlotte (DLC), and 30 on Apr. 20 in Winhall (WJN). There was one report of Snow Bunting: 2 on Mar. 24 in Woodstock (WGE).

#### ICTERIDS THROUGH HOUSE SPARROW

A Bobolink May 1 in Addison (DLC) topped the previous spring first by 1 day. May 4-8 brought a wave of first reports from all over the state, with a high of 4-5 at New Haven on the 8th (KHD). High counts were: 20 in Albany May 13 (TP), 35 at Dead Creek May 21 (MCD,JID), and 22 in Holland May 29 (CF). No less than 15 observers reported first Red-winged Blackbirds Mar. 5-7, when a vanguard (high count of 50, but more typically 2-10) swept into the state. Ca. 500 were seen Mar. 3 in Ferrisburg (MCD,JID), but the next real wave did not come until Mar. 13-15, when 9 others reported firsts, with highs of up to 40. The seasonal highs were: 1,100 on Mar. 16 in Shoreham (WGE,NLM, JPM), 800+ on Mar. 27 at Dead Creek (WGE,NLM), and 12,000+ red-wings, grackles, & cowbirds ("mostly red-wings") on Apr. 1 in S. Burlington (WRB). An Eastern Meadowlark reached Woodstock Mar. 24 (WGE), and several areas reported firsts Mar. 26-Apr. 3. Except for one report of 5 (on Mar. 26 at Dead Creek--MBN), no more than 2 were seen at any one time. The Rusty Blackbird continues to be scarcer than it once was, with only 14 sightings, Mar. 30-May 9, totaling ca. 69 birds. Common Grackles swept back into Vermont Mar. 5-8, with 9 areas reporting first arrivals of 1-19 birds at a time. High counts were: 260 in Shoreham Mar. 16 (WGE,NLM,JPM), and 300+ at Dead Creek Mar. 27 (WGE,NLM). One observer reported Brown-headed Cowbird "first migrants were in Feb." (WGE), but most did not notice returning birds until after Mar. 4 and quite a few not until Mar. 12-14. High counts were: ca. 50 on Mar. 11 in Shrewsbury (LPS), 150 on Mar. 29 in Weybridge (MBN), and 200+ on Apr. 17 at Post Mills (WGE,NLM). There were no spring reports of ORCHARD ORIOLE 1980-1982, but this spring produced a phenomenal 5 sightings: 1 f. on May 11 at a N. Ferrisburg feeder (MCD,JID); 1 m. on May 20 in New Haven (KHD); 1 m. on May 15 & 16 and 1 m. & 1 f. on May 20 at the D.A.R. Mansion in Addison (AJS); 1 m. on May 21 in Manchester (RuS,MMi,EK); and 1 f. or imm. m. on May 22 in Weybridge (MBN). The Northern Oriole first appeared May 1 (for the 4th spring). By May 8 most areas had recorded their first arrivals. At a Ferrisburg feeder, orioles were fed 2 oranges and 1 banana daily May 5-31, and 12 were counted around the feeder on May 17 (MCD,JID). The May snowstorm held up movement somewhat; Craftsbury in the north did not record its first until May 14 (FO). High counts were: 15 on May 21 in southern areas (WJN), and 8 on May 24 in Shoreham (DLC). Two Pine Grosbeaks Apr. 27 in New Haven (KHD) were the only ones reported. Though Purple

Finches overwintered in places, 5 areas reported first arrivals Mar. 1. High counts were: 40 Mar. 7-15 on Snake Mt. (JSA,KMA), 80 on Mar. 27 in Addison (WGE, NLM), and 30+ on Mar. 29 in Brownsville (JEH,BMH). House Finches, which continue their expansion, are becoming common in some areas where they are year-round residents. High counts are on the order of 7-20 per day in some parts of the state's bottom half, and 1 was seen on May 21 in Newport (WGE,GFE,NLM), about as far north as one can get in Vermont. No redpolls and no crossbills were reported. Only 6 areas had Pine Siskins: Albany, 2-3 present Feb. onwards and 8 seen May 11 (TP); Plainfield, 5 on Mar. 9 and 9 on May 24 (MFM); Shoreham, 9 on May 16 and 6 on May 19 (ELW); Cambridge, 1 on May 16 (JGG,RYG); the Island Pond area, 3 on May 15 (REG) and 1 on May 21 (WGE et al.); and Duxbury, 4 on May 23 (FAP). American Goldfinch numbers seemed particularly good throughout the season, with such highs as: 35 at Hartford on Mar. 9 (WGE et al.), 50 at Plainfield on Mar. 20 (MFM), 133 in E. Charlotte on Apr. 17 (DLC), and 75 in Duxbury on Apr. 17 (FAP). Evening Grosbeaks remained in good numbers into April (e.g., 140+ in Woodstock Mar. 9, WGE,NLM; 150 in Woodstock Apr. 15, JMN; ca. 125 in Westford Apr. 17, MJM), and began to abandon feeders and dwindle rapidly in numbers toward the end of April. High counts thereafter were: 3-4 in the Island Pond area May 21 (DLC,WGE, et al.), and 30 in Greensboro May 22 (CF). Last--and no doubt least in our estimation, as evidenced by the failure of nearly everyone to report numbers--was the House Sparrow, that ubiquitous village and city bird whose populations seemed unchanged but who may well face direct competition from increasing House Finches. A study of interspecific behavior in these two commensals of man, as the House Finch advances into House Sparrow territories, could actually be fascinating.

#### Erratum

In the Vermont Bird Records Committee report published with Fall Migration 1982 (p. 9), Orchard Oriole second state nesting record should read: nesting on a private island in Lake Champlain on 26 and 27 June 1982 (not 1983 as printed).

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#### ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE TEXT

WRM - West Rutland Marsh  
BRM - Barton River Marsh  
WMA - Wildlife Management Area  
L. - lake

R. - river  
m. - male  
pr. - pair  
f. - female

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